



Shimer College Bulletin

December, 1975
Mt. Carroll, Ill. 61053



Shimer College Mount Carroll Illinois 61053



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

What all this rambling has been about, at least from my viewpoint, is simply an attempt to help you understand why at least one person thinks Shimer is special and necessary. In one sense, I'm sure my Shimer education does me more good now than if I had stayed in the natural sciences; and yet I feel the Shimer experience is valuable to anyone who seeks to be an intelligently participating citizen — something which we all need to be.

Finally, my thanks to all the Shimer people who have helped hold it together over the years and who have helped make dreams possible for a lot of people (including Barbara Bowdery, who let me live with her with no money involved during my post-Peace Corps semester) — low salaries, cuts in salary, etc. I fully agree that faculty salary upgrading should be given a very high priority.

Sincerely,

Gaye Gilbert Benson, AB '63

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

I also remain active in the Community Development Society (am currently reviewing a proposed Journal article). In addition, I have been active in the Lansing Area League of Women Voters, a 200-member organization, of which I have been president since April. I consider that unpaid professional involvement in my community, and also tuition free continuing education.

Editor's Note:

"Notes from Friends" is a new feature we are trying with this issue of the *Bulletin*. We hope it will continue as a regular way of conveying to our readers the tone of the mail we receive and also serve as a slightly different way of presenting many of the Class Notes that come into our offices. So often these notes come in letters which deserve more attention than a sterile extraction of the facts.

BIRTHS

A son, Paul Matthew, to Robert and Judith Myers Duncan, AB '63, of Brandon, Fla., September 25, 1975. Paul joins brothers, Robbie, 4, and Stephen, 2. Their grandmother, Dorothy Petty, works in Shimer's Campbell Library.

A son, Justin Samuel, to Richard and Marcia Kuellmer Dehnert, AB '74 and AB '72, of Silver City, N.M., September 30, 1975.

A son, Ethan John, to Walter and Anne Hipple, Dean of the College, on November 18, 1975. The nine-pound baby joins Heidi, 2.

DEATHS

Edna C. Dunlap, French and German instructor from 1904 to 1907, died in 1975.

A letter sent to George Barnhart, '48, was returned marked Deceased in October, 1975.

CLASS NOTES

Barbar Aubin, '45, exhibited watercolor-collages in the Illinois Arts Council Gallery, Chicago, during the month of October.

Although she has used numerous media, much of Ms. Aubin's work has been in watercolor because this medium lends itself so well to very personal types of marks and symbols. Her more recent collages have dealt with transforming materials from their original uses and intents into completely new, oftentimes mysterious contexts with dual meanings. She particularly enjoys juxtaposing both concepts and materials.

A graduate of Carlestone College and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Ms. Aubin has taught at the Institute and other schools and centers in the Midwest and Haiti. She has had one-woman exhibitions of watercolors, oils, acrylics, collages and drawings in the Chicago area and in Haiti, and her work has been included in exhibitions throughout the United States, in Haiti and the Near East. Her drawings, paintings and sculptural forms in fiber are in private collections in the United States, Europe and Haiti, and work in fiber has appeared in regional

and national exhibitions, as well as in a traveling exhibition throughout the United States and Canada.

The Fairweather Hardin Gallery, Chicago, and the Art Rental and Sales Gallery of the Art Institute represent Ms. Aubin's work in the various media.

Jon G. Edensword, AB '56, is currently Second Secretary and Consul at the U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan. Jon, his wife, Cora, and their two children, Karen and Diana, have been living in Jordan for two years and expect to be reassigned next summer. Their outside interests include their two Appaloosa horses and expeditions to the desert on archaeological trips.

Peter Cooley, AB '62, announces his new book of poetry, *The Company of Strangers*, published in October by the University of Missouri Press in their Breakthrough series. Poems in the book have appeared in *Poetry*, *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *Esquire*, *The New Republic* and *The Atlantic Monthly*. In the summer of 1975 he was an Atlantic Younger Poet. He is presently the Director of Creative Writing at Tulane University.

Mary Susanna Myers, '66, informs us that Karlene Davis, AB '66, is teaching and giving performances of Haitian exhibition dancing.

WHAT'S DEVELOPING AT SHIMER?

"It could even be reasonably asked whether college life is not even more unfavorable to the development of character than is the savage life outside the walls."

In his Inauguration Charge to President Ralph Conant, Dean of the College, Walter Hipple raised some interesting questions regarding the pursuit of wisdom and perfection. This, of course, was related to the educational function of Shimer College.

Hipple maintains in his address (included in this issue of the *Bulletin*) that, "Our perfection consists in the harmonious development of . . . these sides of human nature — knowledge and the sense of beauty, the powers of conduct and of social life." Now, it is his contention that the realm of knowledge is the naturally emphasized facet at Shimer and only through our "discussions and disputations" do we aim at fulfilling the others. (Please do not let this brief and inadequate summary suffice or supplant a thorough study of Mr. Hipple's own statement.) I wish to expand on this concept (discuss and dispute?) in order to present my own views on the sense of beauty, the powers of conduct and social life among Shimer students today.

As a 1975 graduate it could be argued that either I am too close to student life to provide an unbiased view, or the converse, that perhaps I am closer than the Dean could possibly be. In either case, I would claim that Shimer students are *more* likely to develop in their sense of beauty, and the powers of conduct and social life. I would also have to agree, at least in part, with Dennis Wickman, German instructor, and Chairman of the Humanities Area (see his profile in this issue). Wickman expresses the view that Shimer students are "very good, but they're lazy." In terms of studies this is often the case.

However, when over half of the student body spend part or all of five days gleaning corn for their College; when a handful of students revive and maintain a quality student newspaper; when they produce five dramatic productions in one semester; when they develop proposals that may totally revise the Physical Education program; and when they do the research, write, photograph, and supervise the mailing of the *Alumni Bulletin*, I cannot call them lazy! Nor can I say they are not developing character, a sense of social responsibility, a sense of the aesthetic, on a day-to-day basis.

Perhaps these things I have mentioned are the encroachment of that "savage life outside the walls," but I prefer to think that the walls are imaginary and exist solely for those who insist on perpetuating them. And these walls are perpetuated with the insistence upon unreal ethical standards and unreal teaching standards — such as the mythical superiority that PhD's are supposed to hold over their lesser published colleagues.

Don't misunderstand, I am open for discussion on the issues of what creates a preferable learning environment and what qualities are most desirable in a student. I most definitely regret that a lax attitude towards study exists among some Shimer students, but demands on students in class must be tempered with the demands and rewards of other activities and pastimes.

Read this issue of the *Bulletin*. Keep in mind that most of the articles were written by students for the alumni. Check out the various proposals under consideration and the activities of the past few months. Then put your thoughts in writing and, hopefully, we can revive a dialogue that should continue through the *Bulletin* and the *Symposium*. I cannot stress strongly enough the need and desire on the part of the students for substantial interaction and news from the alumni — What is the savage life like out there?

Yours truly,
Tim Cole, AB '75
Editor

DECEMBER, 1975

SHIMER COLLEGE BULLETIN

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Please send all news, comments, inquiries and address changes to:

Alumni Office
Shimer College
Mount Carroll, IL 61053

SPIRA RESIGNS

Shimer Becomes Financial Success Story

On October 29, 1975, Shimer College completed its return from the state of voluntary bankruptcy when President Ralph Conant announced the resignation of assignee Leonard Spira. Spira, a Chicago attorney, had been given the responsibility of liquidating the College by the Shimer Board of Trustees on November 10, 1973.

According to Dr. Conant, Shimer had incurred debts amounting to \$577,000 when Spira took over in 1973.

Specialist Reviews Admissions

Mr. Luther Hoopes, a well-known college admissions specialist from Baltimore, MD, recently spent a period of a few days on the Shimer campus to help revamp the school's admissions effort. Hoopes has analyzed and advised the departments of several small colleges including two which received the College Entrance Examination Board Award for Best Admissions Department in the country.

Hoopes, though very optimistic about the future, provided a great deal of constructive criticism. His suggestions include across-the-board amendments to current admissions procedures. Included in the anticipated changes is a new logo, which will replace the tree that has stood as Shimer's symbol for many years.

The consultant returned to the campus to present the first phases of his plan for the admissions effort to both the faculty and student body November 5 and 6. He indicated that he expected student enrollment at Shimer to reach 250 by the fall of 1976.

Alumni Keep Moving

We would like to draw your attention to a major problem we are faced with in the Alumni Office: address changes. In mailing the last issue of the *Bulletin* we were informed of over 150 changes from the Postal authorities. This meant that over 150 *Bulletins* were not delivered and Shimer had to pay for their return to the College! If you did not receive the September *Bulletin* this could very well be the reason.

Enclosed with this issue is a Business Reply envelope. This can be used for a number of purposes. First and foremost is the Alumni Fund. Additionally, the envelope can be used to inform us of an address change and for Class Notes. We have also printed a subscription form for the student newspaper, *Symposium*, which can be sent in this envelope. Please make good use of the envelope. If none of these uses applies now, save it for future use.

If you do plan a move, please be sure to include Shimer among those that you notify. It will save us time and money and will keep you in constant contact with your alma mater.

A first class stamp affixed to the envelope over the postal permit will save 12 cents for Shimer.

That amount had been reduced to \$425,000 by June, when Conant began his presidential duties. He raised most of the remaining money through a loan backed by the collateral pledges of 28 local and national friends of the College that ranged from \$500 to \$60,000.

An immediate outcome of this financial victory is the mass of favorable publicity that has resulted. All of the regional and major Chicago papers covered the occurrence with both AP and UPI carrying the story.



On October 2, 1975, Walter J. Hipple announced his resignation as Dean of the College effective February 15, 1976. He did so in order to accept the post of Academic Vice President at West Chester State College, near Philadelphia, PA. No replacement has been chosen. Hipple, who has been known for his strong leadership in campus affairs and for his work on the Student-Faculty Steering Committee during the crisis of 1973-74, sees this change as a challenge to "facilitate the interweaving of the principles of general liberal education with the disciplinary and professional-vocational trainings which principally characterize state universities." Pictured above are Hipple, his wife, Anne, their two-year-old daughter, Heidi, and apparent though not visible, their newly-born son, Ethan.

Our Flag Still Waves

Early this semester Shimer received a new U.S. flag and President Conant received the following note:

On a recent visit to the Shimer campus, the first in nearly 30 years, we were impressed with the flag which had served Shimer these past years. To commemorate our nation's Bicentennial we donate this flag to Shimer College.

Most sincerely,

Jo Severson Haag, '40
Frances Hoeppner Kerns, '40
Shirley Marcellus Craig, '40

GLEANNING PROJECT NETS OVER \$1,000

Student Corn Picking Raises Funds, Publicity

Over a five-day period in October, more than half of the Shimer student body carried out a corn gleanng project which earned over a thousand dollars and encouraging publicity for the College.

During the Inauguration luncheon of November 10, Mr. Bill Fordham of Ohio, IL, presented the College with a check for \$1,000. Fordham's farm was one of two cornfields that was worked by the gleaners. The total value of the corn was actually a little over \$800, the rest constituted a contribution given in the same spirit that yielded about \$300,000 of land and equipment put at the gleaner's disposal.

The efforts of the gleaners, among them Audrey Conant, who was on the fields throughout the project, certainly justified the returns in publicity and earnings. The "Shimer Gleaners," as they were called, were subject to capricious working conditions and widespread confusion. The process of gleanng was simple, but tedious. A volunteer would carry a bushel bag along a row of grazed cornstalks, hoping to find ears missed by the combine. With luck he would hit a spot where the wind had knocked down or tangled several stalks, which meant that the combine had missed many of the ears. But frequently a volunteer would find himself walking hundreds of steps without finding a single ear, carrying a heavy load with him. Only the final day fulfilled the original optimism which involved speculation of over five bushels of dropped corn per acre. A worker had to fill three bags of cobbled corn to net a bushel of shell, or kernels. On the last day a small, rain-soaked cadre of fifteen survivors hit upon a gold mine of row after row of dropped corn. As one worker that day put it, "It's like picking money up off the ground!" She was a first semester student who had stuck with the group from start to finish.

The quantity of corn salvaged by this effort exceeded 400 bushels of shelled corn derived from 56,000 individual ears. Chan Sieben, AB '64, an alumnus and new member of the Board of Trustees who is involved in hybrid development in a farming community near Mt. Carroll, estimated that this amount of corn, which would have been plowed under if it hadn't been gleaned, would provide feed for enough cattle to feed sixty people for one year.

Sieben first came up with the idea for the gleanng project and provided estimates as to the prospective corn yield. Although the initial speculations turned out to be faulty, the reality of the experience for the workers and the benefits to Shimer cannot be derived.

Working closely with the student organizer of the gleanng project, Conrad landola, a first semester student, Sieben helped coordinate this effort which represents the first substantial and successful effort to develop a rapport between the campus and the agricultural community.

Reflecting on the fact that the grain company that bought the first load of corn and Fordham, who processed and bought the second load, both "padded" the checks above the net market value of the corn, landola commented, "This showed that the farmers are willing to help us, and to participate [in our efforts]." He noted also that "students really got an education" through the work involved in the project. Sieben also elaborated on the personal value that the volunteers derived by gaining first hand insight into the nature of the agricultural community. Many of the workers had the opportunity to follow the process from gleanng to drying to storage. Sieben noted that effective farming, being such an integrated and multifaceted vocation, requires a person with a truly integrated educational background such as the type ideally provided by the Shimer curriculum.





Ohio, IL farmer, Bill Fordham, takes the microphone from Board member and alumnus, Chan Sieben, AB '64, at ceremony where Mr. Fordham presented the students with a \$1,000 check for their gleaning efforts on his farm. Looking on is the student organizer of the project, Conrad Landola. In the foreground applauding is Donald Mackay, another new member of the Board of Trustees.

Over 90 students participated in the back-breaking work of gleaning corn throughout hundreds of acres of farmland in northern Illinois.



"Idea of Shimer"

HIGHLIGHTS FESTIVAL OF NEW LIFE

Many students, faculty, alumni and visitors considered the highlight of the weekend of Shimer's Festival of New Life to be the discussion chaired by Dr. Conant on the topic "The Idea of Shimer" held in the Karyn Kupcinec Playhouse on Sunday evening, November 9.

The panel was composed of two faculty members, Robert Schuler, Humanities, and Bob Richardson, Philosophy and Natural Sciences; two students, fourth-year Kathy Chappell, Alton, IL, and third-year Scott Ellsworth, Palos Heights, IL; two distinguished guests who have supported Shimer for many years, Mr. Milton Mayer, newspaperman, editor of *The Progressive*, Dean of the Faculty at International College, and a consultant for The Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, and Professor Emeritus, Richard McKeon, of the University of Chicago, one of the originators of the "Hutchins Plan" there.

The program began with a presentation by Mr. Mayer, a combination of irony and disgust concerning the current dilemma of the liberal arts college competing with the "job-oriented" educational programs found at many large institutions. Mr. Mayer emphasized the need for a broad understanding and desire to learn on the part of individual citizens as an important part of the foundation of a democratic society. A lively discussion ensued dealing with the active and contemplative aspects of man and whether or not Shimer could better realize the renaissance ideal of uniting "head and hand." Is Shimer a liberal arts college utilizing the sense of "Liberal Arts" as exemplified in the creators of the Great Books? How can the enlarged awareness of culture be brought to bear on the policies of a society based on a highly specialized technology? These and many other problems were explored with passion and sensitivity by the participants.

The bringing together of a large number of people with different experiences, especially those currently in the Shimer program and graduates who could offer

insights into the assets and deficiencies of Shimer seen in retrospect, provided a new perspective previously lacking in discussions within the school alone. Hopefully the success of this last symposium will promote further seminars allowing Shimer's ideals and policies to be assessed by all those interested in shaping the curriculum.

The viability of such a forum for discussion was accented in a touching remark made by the new president's first professor at the University of Vermont who had come for the Inauguration weekend, Mr. Rolf Haugen, who, at the end of the forum, announced, "In all my days as a college instructor I have not been privileged to hear such an enlightened discussion on education."

Alumni Suggest Ideas for Giving

Ideas for ways of judging the appropriate amount to donate to Shimer's Alumni Fund have been coming in from various alums. They range from \$100 per alum to the figure that Alice Bro Racher, '41, came up with for the pre-1950 group of \$68.96 — a figure which represented the fund drive total divided by the number of alums from that era.

Perhaps one of the most novel ideas came from a 1975 graduate who wrote, "Please put the enclosed check (\$100) in the Alumni Fund. Since you also seem to be accepting pledges, let me make the following commitment: \$50.00 on December 15, and \$50.00 on February 15, 1976. *I would like to try to return the amount of scholarship help that Shimer gave me over the next ten years or so*, but it would be rather difficult to make a long term schedule at this time. So let my present contribution be the initial step in that direction."

This idea, if carried to its fulfillment by our alumni, would not only insure the future of Shimer, but would provide an adequate and constant base for further scholarship help to the continuing flow of students that come in contact with Shimer. The College's current level of scholarship giving comes to around \$67,700 annually. Gift income that would match this would be most beneficial to the College and to future students.

BODY PSYCHOLOGY PROPOSAL

STUDENTS, FACULTY PLAN NEW FOCUS FOR P.E.

A workshop series on body awareness is in the planning stages by a group of students and faculty. The program is intended to serve as the basis for comprehensive innovation of the Physical Education department, which has for many years suffered a severe lack of funds and resources.

The series, entitled Body Psychology, will entail theme-centered workshops run by specialists from off campus as well as students and faculty on campus. It is tentatively scheduled to begin next semester with a workshop on sex education, conducted by Beverlie Conant, a public health professional. Also in the plans are workshops on sensitivity, massage, yoga, meditation, gymnastics and dance. A Shimer student will be conducting a weekly ballet class. Play, as a form of activity often lost between childhood and adult life, will be explored as a possible workshop theme. Weekend outings for skiing and rock climbing are also under consideration.

According to the student organizer of the series, J Conant, it is intended to facilitate the art of contemplation, "a sustained cycle of activities, characterized by concentration, lack of self-consciousness, discipline and spontaneity, from which naturally emerge effective behavior patterns and increased serenity in the fulfillment of one's highest potential."

The group is still actively seeking visiting instructors and the funds necessary to carry the project through. It is hoped that there will be enough financial support for the group to procure basic gymnastic equipment and to provide expenses for visiting instructors. Any of the alumni who have special skills in gymnastics, dance or any areas mentioned, or know of someone qualified to run one or more of the workshops, is encouraged to contact J Conant or Don Moon at Shimer. Any feedback in terms of suggestions, criticism or encouragement will be appreciated.

Humanities Chairman Comments on Student Potential

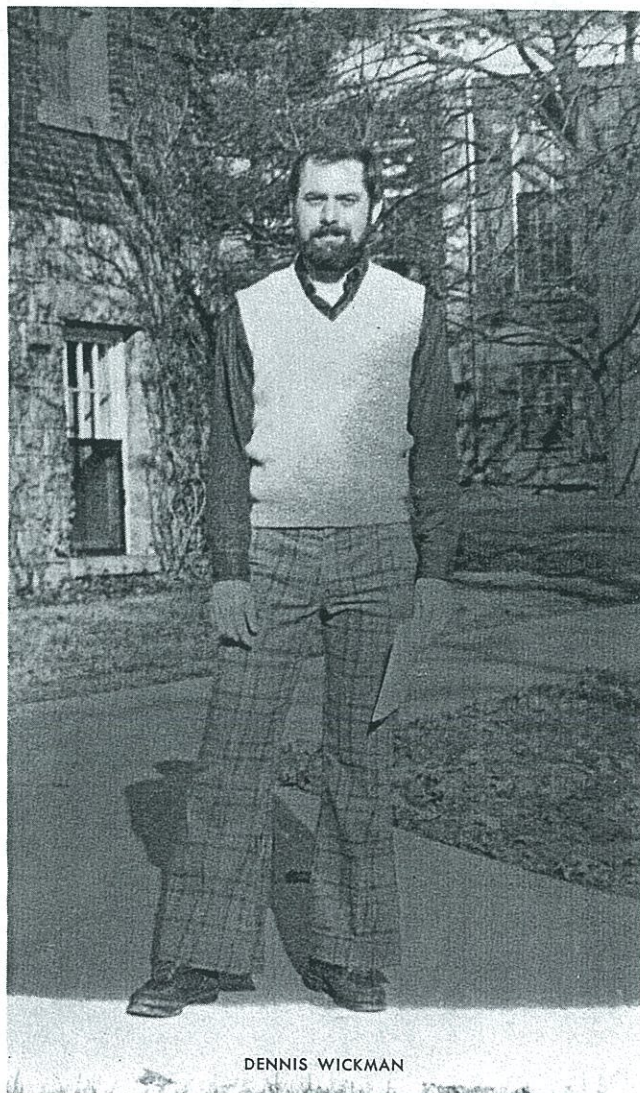
Dennis Wickman, Shimer's German professor and Chairman of the Humanities Area, feels that, although the Shimer community rests on a solid and unique academic foundation, its potential is not fully realized.

Having taught at Cornell University for a time (where he received his M.A. in German Literature in 1966), Wickman has had a chance to compare the experience of teaching in two different contexts. Among its advantages, Shimer gives the teacher a chance to teach a variety of classes. Wickman also teaches Humanities I-Music and other Humanities basic courses; he enjoys the opportunity to extend himself into more than one field.

Also, as a relatively young professor, Wickman appreciates the open atmosphere of Shimer classes permitting experimentation with various styles of teaching. Classes are small, and because of this, Wickman feels he derives much more feedback from the students. This contributes to a constant refinement of style and creates a unique rapport with the students.

Many of his students find Wickman unusually demanding. From his own point of view, Shimer students tend to "drag their feet." "They're very good," he commented, "but they're lazy." This is due, he suggested, to the high proportion of underachievers at Shimer. It is typical, in his opinion, for Shimer to accept students who show promising potential, in spite of a dearth of obvious accomplishment. Many of these students balk at fulfilling this potential unless the professor insists on high standards in his courses.

Wickman refers to a potential weakness of the discussion class method in his comment, "A lot of people like a class where everybody talks a lot — I like it when they say a lot."



DENNIS WICKMAN

"Escape Valve"

Seeking New Uses For January Break

The need has been expressed in several parts of the campus community for greater variety of educational experience. This is considered good both from the view that it would serve as an "escape valve" during the very intense four years at Shimer and that it would provide a way to link the Shimer experience to the world around it.

The January break has been proposed as an ideal time to provide this. There are two immediate possibilities for *this* year. The first involves enrolling in one of the many other colleges who have the same academic calendar. Associate Dean Dick Beeson will be coordinating this aspect.

The second aspect involves helping students find internships or volunteer jobs in education, research, business or industry. Some proposals made thus far include: cataloguing microfilm for research being done on Africa; research assistance to graduate students working on a project of women in medicine; and

helping to reorganize a law office. These are firm offers. Work with an Historical Society, some workshops for handicapped or day care centers are among other possibilities.

We would like to ask alumni and friends to help us find opportunities for students for this January. Our break runs from December 20 to February 1. We'd like to have a job description, hours to be worked, whether there will be pay available, room and/or board.

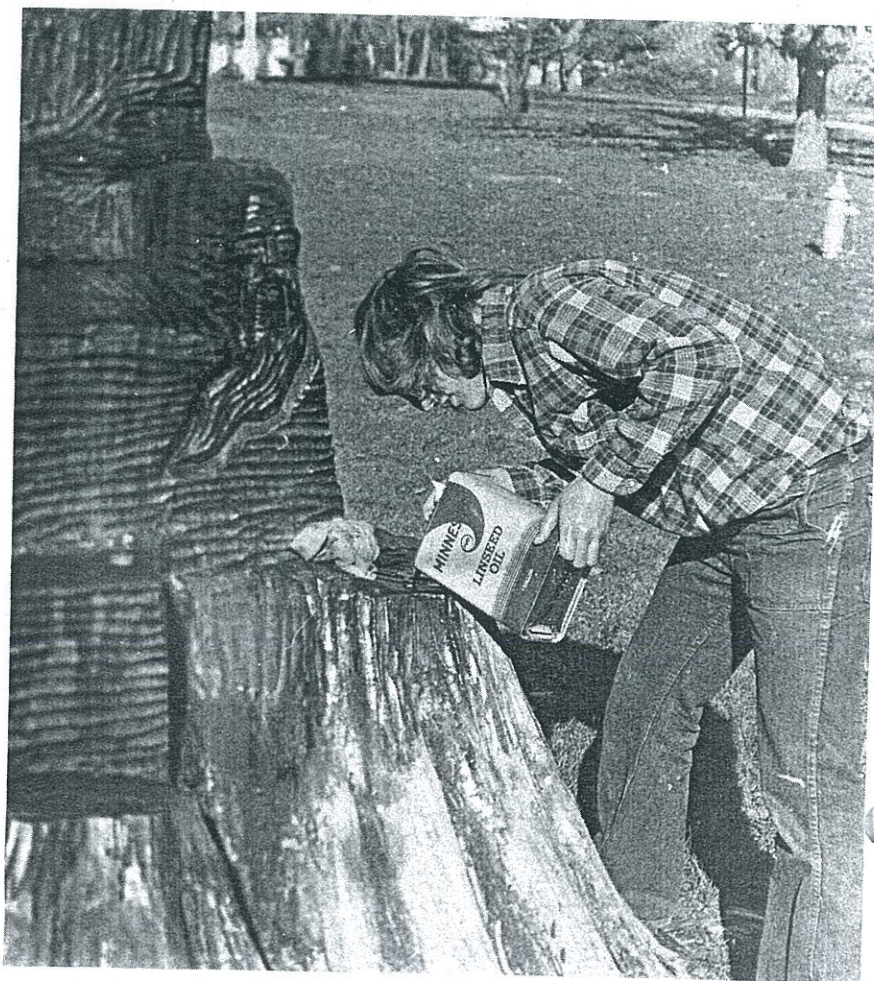
This effort will be coordinated in the Dean of Students Office. Please send any proposals you may have to Sandra Sakurai, Counselor and Registrar. We feel that this will make Shimer more exciting for both current and prospective students as well as for those supervising the various students involved.

Attention 1975 Grads!

Eliot Nusbaum, AB '75, Editor of the Mt. Carroll *Mirror-Democrat*, has informed the Alumni Office that photographs of the graduating class of 1975 are available through the newspaper. If you would like your own copy send \$3.00 for a 5" x 7" print or \$7.00 for one 8" x 10" to:

Eliot Nusbaum, Editor
Mirror-Democrat
Mt. Carroll, IL 61053

Second-year student, Scott Erlinder, Palos Heights, IL carefully prepares the throne on the Quad for winter. The project, which involves coating the huge chair with linseed oil and additional protective materials, was sponsored by the Student Government.



"The Graduate School of Shimer College"

SHIMER INVESTIGATES NEW AFFILIATION

Shimer is currently investigating the possibility of expanding its curriculum through a newly proposed affiliation with International College, Los Angeles, CA. In keeping with the Shimer ideal of assisting the student in developing a rich, personal knowledge, International College is an association of about seventy tutors, including such distinguished creative scholars and artists as Buckminster Fuller, Anais Nin, Lawrence Durrell, Yehudi Menuhin, James Farmer, Bertrand de Jouvenel, Mark Harris, Russell Kirk and Ivan Illich, who accept qualified students to come and study with them at their homes around the world.

Many students have expressed the need to channel their knowledge of the Great Books into an exchange of ideas with people currently devoted to the expansion of intellectual horizons. This program could add a valuable dimension to the Shimer educational endeavor by offering an individual the opportunity to actively pursue an area of his or her interest in a new and stimulating environment.

Students would apply to work with a tutor much in the way that a medieval apprentice might petition a master craftsman. Most likely, the student will have completed the General Studies courses in order to have the requisite background necessary for a tutorial.

The tutor has full power for accepting and judging the student's work. When viewed as a preparation for a dialogue with a contemporary thinker the very tenor of an undergraduate's schooling changes. In addition to accepting qualified upperclassmen, the tutorial program is envisioned as functioning as The Graduate School of Shimer College. Currently 60% of International College's 80 students are in the Doctoral program.

Although many aspects of the proposed affiliation between Shimer and International College still need to be cautiously scrutinized, the spirit of the two schools is similar. A viable educational alternative that emphasizes the need for original and independent thinking is imperative in an age of passive acquiescence supported by the mechanical note-taking found in large, impersonal universities.

President Conant, the faculty and students have been meeting with Mr. Linden G. Leavitt, founder and Dean of International College, to discuss administrative and financial issues critical to the proposed union.

Mr. Leavitt and Mr. Milton Mayer, Dean of the Faculty at I.C., were both on the Shimer campus during Inauguration weekend to meet with students and faculty to discuss the proposed affiliation.

Students Keep Playhouse In Constant Use

Green Curtain Theater sponsored five productions this semester, all student-directed! Early in October three one-act plays were given which included "The Real Inspector Hound," "The Sandbox," and "Mime," a variety of short, original pieces.

"Hound" was directed by second year student Joe Getse, Alsip, IL. "Sandbox" and "Mime" were led by first semester student Daniel Forrest, Doltin, IL. Included in the mime performances in addition to Forrest were Nina Nabor, Evanston, IL, and Steve Haworth, Edina, MN, both first semester students, and Linda Levy, Glenwood, IL, a second year student.

Next in the dramatic season was "That Championship Season" directed by second year student Mike Ladenson of Havertown, PA. Acclaimed one of the "better" student-directed productions of the last five years, it was repeated during the Festival of New Life.

The final production of the fall semester was "Alice in Wonderland" directed by Rick Hopkins, Mt. Carroll, who is working and studying theater as the Technical Director.

All productions were staged in the Karyn Kupcinet Playhouse.



SHIMER'S TWELFTH PRESIDENT COLLEGE INAUGURATES CONANT

On November 10, 1975, Dr. Ralph Wendell Conant was inaugurated as the twelfth President of Shimer College. The event marked the culmination of three days of celebration of the College's "New Life." It marked the second anniversary of the unsuccessful attempt to close the College in 1973.

The ceremony, parts of which were televised in Chicago, was led by Dr. Esther G. Weinstein, the former President, who currently resides in Portland, Oregon. She conducted the program by introducing the various speakers who each delivered a Charge to the new President on behalf of the constituency they represented.

Speaking for the students was Dan Shiner, Tennent, NJ, a third-year student and former Chairman of the Student Government. On behalf of the faculty, Humanities Area instructor Robert Schuler spoke. Dean of the College Walter J. Hipple gave the address for the administration. And the Charge for the alumni and the Board of Trustees was delivered by Board Chairman Barry Carroll, AB '66.

In order to give those of you who were unable to attend some of the flavor of the ceremony we are reprinting here a sample of the speeches. First is Dan Shiner's Charge to the new President, followed by the challenging address "Shimer College and the Pursuit of Wisdom" delivered by Dean Walter Hipple. Following both of these is Ralph Conant's own Inaugural Address in which he reflects on the past, proposes for the future, and accepts the Charge as Twelfth President of Shimer College.

An interesting sidelight to this occasion is that two of the speakers, Barry Carroll and Walter Hipple, were members of the Presidential Search Committee which selected Ralph Conant last spring.

"Welcome to Utopia!"

Students, faculty, members of the administration, staff, honored guests and anyone I've missed.

Two years ago today, a thirty-minute announcement in Metcalf Auditorium triggered a six-week campaign which saved a 120-year-old college. Similar announcements were undoubtedly made in the fifty or sixty colleges which have closed in the past few years; yet only we survived. In trying to determine "why us?" I can find no complete answers; but I believe I have found several partial answers.

The first is a general impertinence. To paraphrase Robert Kennedy, "others see what is and ask 'why?' I see what could be and ask 'why not?'" Other students saw their colleges closing and asked "why?" We saw the possibility of remaining open and asked "why not?" It was an impertinent question, one students simply don't ask, but — we did.

Somehow it seems that the Shimer education is the root of this impertinence. For all the cynicism inherent in it, we learn to ask those questions other colleges train their students to avoid. Because we learn how to think and not what to think, we can deal with an extraordinary situation; we aren't afraid to ask questions.

A second quality which I believe helped us to survive is our rejection of certain conventional beliefs. Today, simply attending a college which does not directly train one for a profession is the first rejection. When the faculty went on half-salary, they rejected the status of the great god, Money. And when conventional wisdom said Shimer was closing, we rejected it.

Today, we welcome to Shimer Dr. Ralph Conant. In coming to Shimer College, Dr. Conant left behind a respected position at the stable Southwest Center for Urban Research. He accepted the presidency of Shimer over an offer from a large university for a position with almost double the salary. Part of the reason I respected Dr. Conant from the day I met him should be obvious: he rejected certain conventional beliefs. And in the past five months he has more than lived up to my expectations.

Welcome to Utopia, Dr. Conant.

I could continue, but you will hear enough speeches today. I suggest, however, that we continue asking impertinent questions and rejecting conventional beliefs. It is something I have always done — and look where I am now.

"Shimer College and the Pursuit of Wisdom"

What I shall be saying is broadly philosophical; but I wish to preface that statement with a remark especially pertinent to this day. I am delighted to speak at the inauguration of Ralph Conant.

Mr. Conant's educational vision and scholarship, his administrative and developmental skills, meet our need admirably. And he should continue to receive from us that steady support through vicissitudes which we today symbolically offer.

My first thought, on considering this talk, was that I would be obliged by the ceremonial splendor of the occasion to deliver it in Latin. I even found a good quotation from Terence as a starter:

*Di immortales, homini homo quid praestat!
stulto intellegens quid interest!*

But the classical languages, alas, are not Shimer's strong point, nor mine either — and so the vulgar tongue must serve. In plain English, Terence said:

Immortal gods! how much does one man excel another! what a difference there is between a wise man and a fool!

CHARGES FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS

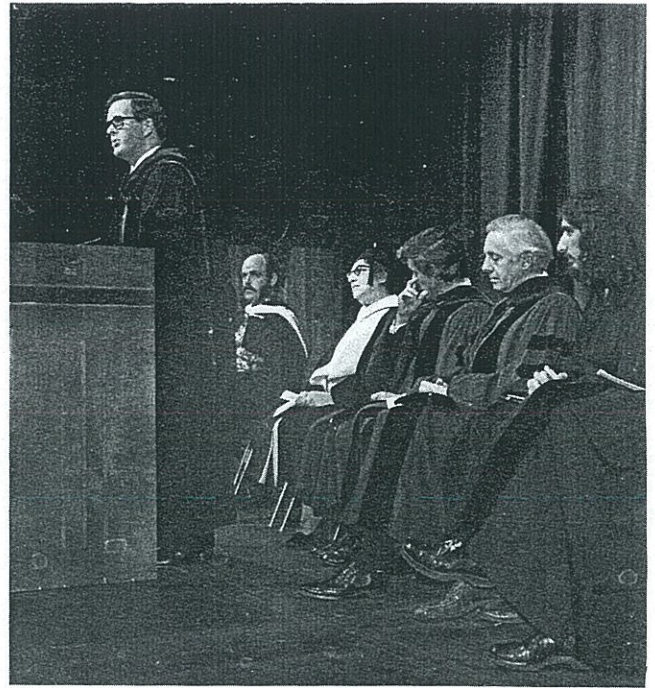
CEREMONY FEATURES SPEAKERS

Very true, no doubt; but if only we knew what it is to be a wise person! This is exactly my task: to solve the riddle of the ages, to explain to you what wisdom is, in the course of the next nine minutes. And naturally, I shall also want to show how far Shimer College is a purveyor of that wisdom.

Since one of the first lessons of scholarship is that one should never rely simply upon one's own thoughts, I shall begin anew with a new quotation. "Human perfection," wrote Matthew Arnold, is "an inward spiritual activity having for its characters increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy, not a having and a resting, but a growing and a becoming." This will serve very nicely as a cliché for this day, or an insight for any day to those who have the wit to find Arnold's meaning. Note that word "becoming": perfection is not a having and a resting, but a growing and a becoming. Arnold is a spokesman of the modern world, and his is a dialectic of becoming, as Plato's had been a dialectic of being. The Greeks sought the changeless and absolute; the moderns seek the growing and evolving. Modern thought is a study of life and this world, not of an eternal order above life; and life is action, change and growth.

As an inward, spiritual activity, perfection evolves in the mind of man; and Arnold's sentence suggests the four facets of the mind which ought to develop harmoniously: sweetness, light, life, sympathy. Like most religious thinkers, Arnold is given to speaking in poetical formulae, and it takes some effort to put those four aspects of perfection into straightforward prose.

"Light" is knowledge; and surely the first mark of a wise man is his systematic matrix of principles and the wealth of information which fills that matrix. The Shimer curriculum is very strong indeed on principles, though rather less so on information. Shimerians are more apt to know the bases of atomic theory than the formula for ethyl alcohol, more apt to be interested in historiography than in the facts of history itself. To know a fact or a date may even mark one, in this community, as a pedantic drudge blind to the grandeur of great concepts. Certainly, however, Shimer does better than other schools, better even than the greatest universities, to insure some insight into the many departments of human concern and inquiry, some sense of the totality of things and of our place in that totality. No Shimerian would make the error of a learned and witty professoress of Anglo-Saxon with whom, some years ago at Cambridge, I was debating general education. The University of Cambridge is one of the world's major centers of inquiry in the natural sciences, yet the faculty had just turned down a proposal that



Barry Carroll, AB '66, delivers his Charge to the President. Guests on the platform behind Mr. Carroll include (l. to r.): Robert Schuler, Humanities faculty; Esther G. Weinstein, President Emeritus; Ralph W. Conant, President; Walter J. Hipple, Dean of the College; and Dan Shiner, third-year student.

all undergraduates be required to pass an examination in a science, any science. My interlocutor justified that decision against my strictures by remarking, "I'm not interested in things made by God — only in those made by man." That was witty, but it wasn't the wisdom which we seek. No one, not even a professoress of Anglo-Saxon, can have an adequate view of life who has not studied that composite picture of the universe and man which the sciences provide, and who has not grasped also the intellectual habits which go by the name of scientific method.

But fundamental as the sciences are in forming our criteria of truth and our conceptions of the physical and biological realms of being, they will not alone furnish our minds with knowledge. We need also, among other things, a sense of history. Man does not know who he is and where he stands unless he is conscious of his place in the stream of civilization, unless he sees what forces have brought him hither, what has been gained — and what lost — on that long journey, and whither his momentum might now carry him. At Shimer we do something, although (as I have hinted) not enough, to provide that command of history — of political and economic and social and philosophical and religious and scientific and artistic and literary history.

I shall not run *seriatim* down the list of the disciplines which the educated man must master. There is

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)

CONANT ACCEPTS CHARGE

"SHIMER WILL SURVIVE AND FLOURISH . . .

Two years ago today the Board of Trustees retained Leonard Spira, a bankruptcy lawyer, to liquidate the College.

On October 29 Mr. Spira returned the assets of the College to the Board of Trustees.

During that two-year period, instead of liquidation, the College was operated without a deficit. Its debts were reduced from \$577,000 to \$360,000 and secured in a new five-year loan at favorable interest rates.

This was the work of the entire Shimer community with the strong support of the people of Mt. Carroll and the region, of its alumni, and of friends everywhere.

Their combined efforts have given the new administration a place on which to stand and a clear set of goals.

Shimer College is unique in that it has maintained, against contrary trends in education, an integrated liberal arts program based upon the study of the work of great thinkers from ancient times to the present. While other liberal arts colleges have responded to the widespread and growing demand for vocational and professional education at the undergraduate level, Shimer has insisted upon the importance of a sound liberal education as the basis for advanced specialty studies as well as for the experience of life.

The Shimer curriculum has at its core the simultaneous study of the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences which builds toward an understanding of relationships among the various fields of knowledge.

The core curriculum is supplemented by satellite courses designed to prepare the student for graduate or professional studies.

Thus the Shimer student can prepare for specialty studies in economics, engineering, the sciences, law, medicine and teaching — to name a few.

Shimer College has no academic ranks, no departments which divide the disciplines, few lectures, and few textbooks.

While most Shimer faculty start out their academic careers as specialists, because that is the way they were trained, at Shimer they become generalists because that is what the program demands.

Shimer faculty attend each other's classes, and they work in inter-disciplinary committees which plan and

replan the curriculum and courses each year.

Shimer instruction is carried out in small seminars in which students are expected to be as well prepared as the instructor.

This arrangement is the heart of the Shimer concept.

Our first goal is to strengthen the Shimer curriculum and instructional program as described here.

Our second goal is to find ways to relate effectively to the world of work and to graduate studies and professional training.

In these first two objectives, we need to do what we do best — better. We need to broaden and enrich our concentration courses. We need to experiment with several 3-2 programs in which a student studies the liberal arts at Shimer for three years and in a professional program elsewhere for two, thus receiving joint degrees.

The community and region have demonstrated their support of the College. Now it is time that the College responded with educational, cultural and recreational services which justify that support.

Among other things that means we must attract more students from the surrounding regions. We need to make special arrangements for adults in the regular curriculum. We should open to the surrounding community special seminars and conferences, lectures and guest artists, films, and special television programs followed by discussions. Our neighbors ought to have access to college facilities such as the tennis courts and swimming pool, and the theater and fine arts programs should offer instruction to local youth.

We are adding dimensions to the College. Planned new programs include greatly expanded scholarship program for talented and needy students;

A faculty fellowship program which will provide opportunities for instructors to find intellectual refreshment away from campus every four or five years;

A Shimer-Chicago Center which would provide opportunities in research, internships, courses, and conferences for students and faculty;

An enriched theater arts and fine arts program which could include a mutually beneficial relationship with the Timber Lake Playhouse;

An enriched science program with fine laboratory facilities.

WILL NOT ALTER PURPOSE OR DIRECTION"

At the same time there are some pending issues that need in depth discussion in the Shimer tradition. We need to make a re-examination of the Early Entrant program. Is Shimer a super prep school for some? If so, is this good or bad for Shimer? At the faculty level it must be conceded that the Ph.D. as a measure of scholarly competence is not necessarily a measure of teaching competence. We should ask, what is the relevance of doctoral training to the Shimer method?

Some practical goals have been set by the new administration. In resource development we intend to establish a \$5 million restricted endowment to avoid any further deficit. In Admissions, we intend to avoid a net fall off in enrollment in the second semester, reach an enrollment of 250 for the Fall of 1976, and achieve a net growth of 50 students each year up to a total of 550.



RALPH WENDELL CONANT
Twelfth President of Shimer College

We have to find a new Dean of the College who is a scholar, a political statesman, a program developer and a fund raiser.

We are working toward the reorganization and enrichment of student services, new off-campus opportunities during the January interim and the summer break, placement services for jobs, graduate and professional schools, and for periods in which the student chooses to take some time off from school. Psychological and health services need to be made more professional and sympathetic. Student housing and food service should be improved.

The priorities of the new administration are:

First, to place the College on a sound financial basis with an efficient administration and an endowment of \$5 million over a two-year period.

Second, to strengthen and expand the faculty while maintaining a 10- or 12-to-1 student-faculty ratio.

Third, to expand enrollment while maintaining standards.

Fourth, to provide educational, cultural and recreational services to the community and region, and

Fifth, to develop new dimensions in such areas as the Shimer-Chicago program, the Shimer-at-Oxford program, Shimer in Berlin, the International Graduate School program, Theater Arts and Science.

Shimer will survive and flourish in the vanguard of a renewed movement to bring true education back into American higher education.

Shimer will continue to demonstrate that learning is the mutual responsibility of instructor and student.

It is part of our credo that learning should never cease in one's lifetime; that intellectual discipline is the basis of creative thought; and that creative thought is essential to the preservation and growth of our free society.

Shimer College will not alter its purpose or direction — only strive to achieve the high ideals and aspirations it has set for itself.

This I pledge in accepting your charge.

Admissions Reaching In New Directions

"It will never be the same again" would be an appropriate slogan for the Admissions Office at Shimer College these days. Based upon careful analysis of data gathered in the past fifty days the admissions staff is reaching out in significantly new directions. One striking change is a new procedure for maintaining contact with prospective students. The procedure looks like this:

- I. *Day of initial inquiry* — an introductory autotyped letter, a catalogue, and an application are sent out.
- II. *One week later* — a three-page autotyped letter from a faculty member is sent out. This letter introduces the "idea" of Shimer, the faculty, and certain recent graduates of the college. A campus visit is encouraged.
- III. *Another week later* — a book from one of the introductory courses, along with an explanatory letter, is sent out. Again a campus visit is encouraged.
- IV. *Three weeks later* — if no reply cards have been received in response to the previous mailings the prospective student is called. If he is no longer interested in Shimer his name goes into the inactive file.
- V. Periodic contact (newsletters, etc.) is maintained with each student in the active file.

The virtues of this procedure are threefold: steady contact is maintained with each student until he/she has made a decision concerning Shimer, campus visits are strongly encouraged, and admissions counselors are freed from the task of writing individualized letters to each prospective student. The counselors thus have time to visit high schools on a systematic basis — a practice virtually abandoned in the past three years.

This new contact procedure, the fact sheets, and the *College Bound* series (to be described later) are the projects recommended by Luther Hoopes prior to the submission of his formal report which is expected early in December. Luther Hoopes, a consultant and president of *Interpreting Institutions*, was sought out by Ron Goldblatt the week prior to Mr. Goldblatt's moving to Mt. Carroll as Director of Admissions. Mr. Goldblatt was able to interest Mr. Hoopes with the challenge and uniqueness of Shimer. With the support of President Conant and the Admissions Committee an agreement was reached with Luther Hoopes to conduct a total study of the admissions procedure at Shimer College. Many admissions directors contacted

by Mr. Goldblatt consider Mr. Hoopes to be *the* outstanding consultant on admissions in the United States.

Other new directions instituted by the admissions office include:

- I. A series of articles (*College Bound*) on choosing a college — these will be sent free on a monthly basis to high school papers in a five-state region. Announcements of this service have been sent to 4,000 high schools; over 900 positive replies have been received with acceptances still running 50 to 100 per day.
- II. Special weekends for prospective students interested in January admission. Through a methodical search of admission files 150 possible students have been identified for January admission. Phone and letter contact with each of these students has been initiated and will be completed by December 1st.
- III. *Alumni Contacts*. Letters are being sent to all graduates in the last seven years in order to obtain information concerning their graduate work and present jobs. From this information prospective students will gain a clearer idea of the diversity of endeavors for which Shimer can prepare them.
- IV. *Analysis of previous college board searches*. A study of the response rates to searches undertaken in the past three years has led the office to change geographical and other search parameters in order to increase the efficiency of the searches.
- V. A fact sheet about Shimer which has been sent to all high school counselors within the local five-state region.
- VI. Participation in the ACT Educational Opportunity Service for the first time. This is a special kind of search mailing.

A minimum of 30-35 entering students is expected for January; this is double the figure for each of the previous two years. The number of new students expected for September 1976 is 125. Evidence indicating how effective the "new directions" will be in helping to reach these figures will become available early in January.

EDITOR'S NOTE: In the September *Alumni Bulletin* we promised a narrative of Suhail Ahmed's experience being smuggled from West Pakistan to Bangladesh. As of the publication of this issue, he is investigating the possibility of publishing his account in another magazine. We are, therefore, postponing our account.

ALUMNI ORGANIZE THROUGHOUT U.S.

Several regional alumni associations have simultaneously formed across the country as part of an overall increase in alumni activity since Ralph Conant took office. They have each taken steps to help in the Alumni Fund Drive of \$200,000. Usually setting their sights on a goal which is the equivalent of \$100 per alum in each region, groups in New York, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco have already begun contacting one another through phone calls, letters, gatherings and meetings.

The Chicago group, most successful thus far due to their proximity to the College and the larger size of the regional group (600 of 2900), held a reception for Dr. Conant in October attended by seventy people. One of the more honored guests at this reception was Mrs. Marguerite Bro, wife of Albin C. Bro, president of Shimer from 1939 to 1949.

Anyone interested in forming new groups should contact the Alumni Offices at Shimer for assistance and mailing lists. Also, if you are interested in any of these areas but have not yet been contacted, the people to get in touch with are:

NEW YORK

Chris and Louisa Scioscia Stephens
7 Terrace Drive
Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706
(914) 478-1639

Burton and Audrey Meltzer (Parents)
11 Church Lane
Scarsdale, NY 10583
(914) 472-9278

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Ben and Janet Gibstein Turner
1523 Live Oak Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 587-7719

CHICAGO

Tom and Pinky Marble Poirot
421 Elm Street
Deerfield, IL 60015
(312) 945-1140

LOS ANGELES

Carolinda Rubenstein
30616 South Ganado Drive
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274
(213) 541-1584

SAN FRANCISCO

Ruth Jacobs
1360 Green Street, #9
San Francisco, CA 94109
(415) 885-6720
Erik and Patricia Long Wernes
1011 Ulfian Way
Martinez, CA 94553
(415) 228-8123

A Progress Report

The following table shows the amount received from alumni in the various regions where active alumni associations have formed and the amounts they have pledged to raise. The figures reflect the totals from June 1, 1975, when Ralph Conant took office; they are current up to November 24, 1975.

REGION	CURRENT TOTAL	PLEDGED GOAL
Chicago	\$ 8,672.97	\$ 60,000
Los Angeles	1,440.00	10,000*
Washington, D.C.	1,044.87	10,000
San Francisco	695.00	10,000
New York	445.00	10,000
Sub Total	\$12,297.84	\$100,000
Additional Alumni Giving	11,308.14	*Unconfirmed
TOTAL	\$23,605.98	

NOTES FROM FRIENDS

"THE BEST THING SHIMER CAN DO FOR ME IS TO BE

I was pleased to receive the Shimer Bulletin, pleased too by the spirit of confidence evident therein. I was especially pleased to see material of a more personal nature written by students, faculty and staff. Smallness per se (i.e. 182 students) is not a virtue, but the ability to be personal which it affords surely is. The world is hungry for this and it needs to be emphasized in Shimer's words and deeds.

John Graham, AB '68

Dear Dr. Conant,

I want to wish you success in putting Shimer back on her feet. We need the small college and the ideals in the world today as we did when I was a Jr. College student in 1943-1945. A whole new world was opened to me and I found I had talents I never knew I had. A student in a small college is never a number. I only wish there had been a four-year college at that time.

A small contribution is enclosed . . . little enough to give to a good cause. . . .

The best thing Shimer can do for me is to Be, to be more than it ever has been before.

Patricia Drennan Ficht, '45

How nice that Shimer finally has a decent alumni rag! Hope it meets with much success in the coming years! I can honestly say that reading it filled me with a rather dangerous nostalgia which may yield several letters to old friends!

Sammie Snyder Moshenberg, AB '72

Dear Tim:

I liked the enthusiasm in your "Statement," September, 1975. Also, Symposium. Please use this small donation as a small "plug" for one of your numerous drains.

I went directly from F.S.S. to the University of Minnesota as a Sophomore. At the time I attended F.S.S. I remember our tests, "Honor System," originated at the University of Chicago. It was a fine, small school and my easing into this huge University was a painless procedure.

I studied piano under Elizabeth Schuster — also did choral and Glee Club accompaniment. Besides Freshman College work I was active in Drama. I played in an outdoor production of "As You Like It," loved the fencing lessons, I played Orlando. Also played Tom Wrench in "Trelawney of the Wells." I have some of the funny, lovely pictures of that time at F.S.S.

I'm so glad F.S.S. went co-educational finally these past years. How it must have vitalized that campus! So much more in step with reality — and normalcy.

One of my grandsons took his Junior year at Aberdeen, Scotland. I went over and visited at Oxford, a friend of ours is a Don there. Then on to Scotland for my clan's millenium in 1971.

My very best to that school that is alive and alert to the needs of young people today.

H. Ruth Stephan Beyer, '17

Enclosed is a check in behalf of my wife, Elizabeth Miles Myers. She received a diploma in Elocution from the Academy in 1921. After graduation from Wellesly she was on the Shimer faculty 1925-1926.

Mrs. Myers and I grew up in Mt. Carroll and have always had close ties with Shimer. President William Parker McKee married us.

We wish you full success in your efforts to restore Shimer College to a strong position in the educational field.

Norval F. Myers

... TO BE MORE THAN IT EVER HAS BEEN BEFORE"

Gentlemen:

Just a token to help the school I enjoyed tremendously during WW II (1943-1944). The boys were away and I was one of the bunch that took the bus to Freeport to swoon over Frank Sinatra movies. Hope I can contribute more later.

Lois Jean Harris Schroeder, '44

Dear Friends at Shimer —

I am enclosing a small contribution to help with your herculean task of keeping Shimer the excellent school it has always been!

Shimer today and the Shimer of my day — almost 45 years ago — are very different in countless ways but that indomitable spirit survives!!

My best to you all; wish this could be a thousand times greater.

Janet Zerfass Verveer, '33

Dear Dr. Conant:

The news concerning the reopening of Francis Shimer College has just come to me in a letter from S. J. Campbell of Mt. Carroll. He has suggested that I might jot down a few of my own feelings and experiences in Mt. Carroll related to Francis Shimer.

These experiences had their beginning about 1912. My three sisters graduated from Shimer before continuing their education elsewhere, and I was impressed at an early age of the importance of education. I did not attend Shimer as a student, but the influence of the College in Mt. Carroll was generally felt, and I am sure this impact on the community resulted in a higher percentage of local high school graduates attending colleges and universities elsewhere.

Although I did not attend classes at Shimer I did have a close relationship with the old (9 hole) golf course there on the Campus. In fact, S. J. Campbell introduced me to the game when I was about 12 years of age. As I look back, my game was better then than it is now.

I also have the somewhat dubious distinction of having helped "build Shimer" as I worked as a laborer for the contractor, who built one of the dormitories on the campus.

Francis Shimer's influence on the community, the opportunity for an education it offered and the example it set for all to see, has had a not to be underestimated bearing on the lives of all those in Mt. Carroll and the surrounding area, as well as those whose homes were in distant areas.

I am sure that all wish you success in your Administration and in your fund raising for Francis Shimer College.

Sincerely,

John B. Dynes

The enclosed check is an unrestricted gift from Jim Bloch, AB '67, and Kay Bowen, AB '66. An additional [amount] will be sent prior to June 30, 1976. We are excited about the new stirrings at Shimer, and hope for your growth and stabilization. We hope that the Hutchins ideal continues to be served by the program; the benefits of "learning how to think" have been obvious to us in our graduate educations, jobs, and life — enjoyments.

Kay (who is no longer "Mrs. Bloch," having legally regained her maiden name) is currently working on a M. Lib. Sci. at Indiana University at Bloomington, with special interest in children's literature and children's services. I am in my fifth year on the staff of a community mental health center serving five counties in south-central Indiana (labelled a "staff psychologist," I do a number of things, including psychotherapy, psychological evaluation, community consultation, staff and intern training and supervision).

We continue to live in a cabin in the woods, enjoying work and life. Shimer has been very important to us, and we hope for its success.

Jim Bloch, AB '67

More NOTES FROM FRIENDS

Since I'm unemployed, philanthropy comes hard, but after reading the September Bulletin, how can I not help out? The enthusiasm and skills which are regenerating Shimer sure come through in the Bulletin. The correspondence seminars initiated by Mr. Sakurai are an excellent idea. Good luck.

Patrick McGuire, x '71

Congratulations on the all new, revised, relevant Alumni Bulletin. Perhaps now it will be used for more than the lining of bird cages or wrapping dead fish. Truly an excellent job; I'm impressed.

Danny Shiner, Current Student

Dear Dr. Conant:

Congratulations and welcome to Shimer!

I am a 1963 Shimer graduate and still consider Shimer very much "my school." I'm sure that this feeling is strengthened by the fact that my two younger brothers also went to and graduated from Shimer and that I returned in the spring of 1967 and did an additional semester's work which applied toward my M.S. from the University of Missouri. (Since special arrangement had been made for that, I was somewhat jokingly but proudly called "our first graduate student" during that period.)

My husband and I were particularly interested and pleased when we read the outline of your background in Shimer's recent mailing. We both earned the M.S. in community development from Missouri and are currently involved in community related fields. While Shimer itself is rather well isolated from an urban area of any great size, most of its students will live their lives in such areas, and all, regardless of residence, will certainly be influenced by overall urban problems and the solutions we develop for them. I very strongly believe that the greatest function Shimer can play is in continuing to give its students a broad liberal education which will prepare them to adequately analyze and understand what is happening around them.

In my own case, my Shimer concentration was in the natural sciences, an area which continues to hold much interest for me. However, after a year at Wesleyan in Connecticut which was enough to convince me that I did not want to teach in a formal setting, I joined the Peace Corps and was sent to Chile in a rural community development project. I liked the work and decided that was what I wanted to do. Because of the breadth of my Shimer preparation, despite my natural science concentration, I found that in switching to a social sciences area I still had no make-up work to do and completed the 60-hour degree with my extra Shimer semester, a full year at Missouri and one term of summer school. While many people remain in the fields for which they originally train, there is an increasing number of people who do not. A program like Shimer's increases both the ease and the likelihood of people making such changes.

I believe that Shimer is very definitely a special place. I have also convinced my husband of this, and contrary to what seems to be the general case in such situations, we contribute no money to his undergraduate school but we do to Shimer. While he has visited campus with me and has had opportunity to meet various people there, the biggest factor in his decision is simply his knowledge of how I look at and analyze things and the credit I give to Shimer for that.

I would also add that I was a two-year early entrant. I very much hope that Shimer continues with the program. And, that it continues to maintain its flexibility in programming for all students. Again, that family experience: I was a two-year early entrant and graduated in four years; my brother, Grant, was a high school graduate who graduated in three years and went to Northwestern Medical School (he now practices in Cincinnati); and my brother, Boyd, who was a high school graduate and graduated in five years with a double major and last spring received his M.S. and is teaching. The attitude which encourages such variety is an important part of the total Shimer atmosphere and experience.

As for my own current activities — I have done several part-time things for Michigan State University since coming to Michigan almost five years ago; and will this fall, for the second time, teach a course called "Labor in the Community." The course is directed toward labor union members and others who might be interested and is taught off-campus. It focuses on effective involvement and action in the community. Last fall the students ranged in age from 23 to 58, included whites of various ethnic backgrounds, blacks, and Chicanos, and both union and non-union people — we had a wild time! I look forward to it again.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 20)

Opening Lines of Communication

After a period of three years, Shimer College students have revived the student newspaper under the new name *Symposium*. Copies of the first three issues have been mailed free to alumni. The fourth issue is currently in publication, but will only be mailed to paid subscribers. The adjacent form can be used for subscriptions as well as for address changes. Please clip it and enclose payment either in the Business Reply envelope provided with this issue of the *Bulletin* or in an envelope addressed to: *Symposium*, Shimer College, Mt. Carroll, IL 61053.

Editors-in-Chief of the *Symposium* are Sandra Kozlowski and David Shiner; the staff includes twenty other students. The first three issues were brought to the alumni free through gifts from individual alums and the College.

SYMPOSIUM SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Please send me:

☐ 1 semester at \$1.75 ☐ 1 year at \$3.50

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Make check payable to *Symposium*

Please note if this is a new address: ☐

"Shimer College and the Pursuit of Wisdom"

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

something further, beyond the facts and beyond the principles, an indefinable spirit which the really knowledgeable man insensibly acquires — a taste by which he distinguishes what is true and solid from what is pretentious claptrap or facile logic-chopping. We live in an age of humbug: happy the man who can recognize humbug in the spinner of a new cosmology, in the trenchant social philosopher, in the sophisticated literary critic!

Now, all of this — fact and principle and intellectual taste — is still knowledge; and the power of light or knowledge is one aspect only of that manifold perfection which is the end of life. "Sweetness" was Arnold's metaphor for a second aspect, the sense of beauty. The world and human nature are full of beauties — the beauty of a landscape, of a poem, of an elegant chain of reasoning, of gentle manners, of a noble or loving heart. And his life is impoverished whose sensitivity to these beauties is not quickened and his judgment sharpened. Colleges generally, and this college not less than others, fall much farther short here than in the realm of knowledge. We do indeed have more experience, and perhaps taste, in literature than do most collegians elsewhere. But sensitivities of eye and ear are not adequately cultivated, nor is the general character of campus life distinguished by its aesthetic quality; indeed, one often detects the unspoken attitude that a studied indifference to beauty, and especially to the more material beauties, is a sign of moral superiority.

There is, as I have said, a beauty of manners and character. Indeed, the beauties of the arts are in great measure borrowed through the representation or suggestion of the nobility or beauty of human nature. Yet it remains true that the chief domain for

character and manners is not beauty but action. The "increased life and increased sympathy" of Arnold's formula are the two powers of conduct and of social life, the domain of the practical and moral. And here, although these concerns engross still more of life than do the powers of knowledge and of beauty, colleges do least. But it is necessarily so. Moral attitudes, practical habits, sympathies and preferences, cannot be directly taught. It makes sense to say, "He got an A in Soc 2, although he had trouble with Math"; but it would be odd to say, "He did pretty well in Courage 21, but he flunked Chastity 33." The reason is, of course, that theory can be communicated by direct instruction, but virtue must be acquired by habitual exercise. Too little in the life of this campus, or of most campuses, provides such exercise; and it could even be reasonably asked whether college life is not even more unfavorable to the development of character than is the savage life outside the walls. The most we are entitled to hope is that with breadth of knowledge will come some breadth of sympathy; that understanding the causes and consequences of our choices will facilitate right action for those who have good will; and that with the cultivation of the sense of beauty the grosser and less social passions will be moderated.

Our perfection consists in the harmonious development of all these sides of human nature — knowledge and the sense of beauty, the powers of conduct and of social life. And although, in the nature of things, our college must operate largely in the realm of knowledge, its discussions and disputations, its committees and courses and curricula, aim ultimately at the whole of perfection. That developed and ever-developing state of the soul is wisdom, and is the end of life.